

QATOR✱ITRÌNS

TALOSSA'S PREMIER NEWS-MAGAZINE

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THE STATE OF THE REPUBLIC

How we stand, four months after Independence Day

by Jonathan Kelley

TALOSSA: STATE OR NATION?

An examination of Talossa's intrinsic identity

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An editorial on the Republic of Talossa

by Miestrâ Schivâ

END THE GREAT SERIOUSNESS

An exclusive book excerpt from *Dare Something Worthy*

by Chris Gruber

Kasimir Malevich, *The Aviator* (1914)

ALSO: news, editorial, wicked questions and MORE inside!

editorial

THOSE WHO FORGET HISTORY...

Our former monarch, as we all know, has a rather regrettable appetite for dragging the personal lives of his political enemies into debate. Chris Gruber was only the last in a long line of people on the receiving end of such treatment; I myself was part of that long line. Apparently, my personal life is of such great interest to the illustrious founder of the nation that he still finds it difficult to stop talking about it.

Never mind. Ben-bashing ain't what I'm here for today. The point I was making is that new and untrained citizens of the Kingdom tend to be so overawed with the undoubted achievements of Talossa (the twenty-five years of continuous history, *el glheß*, etc) that they tend to take whatever the King says at face value. Including his sometimes very warped opinions of his political enemies, past and present.

Our Secretary of State is currently making archival records of all the discussions on Wittenberg's current incarnation. Some of these earlier discussions happened to centre on yours truly, and the bizarrely prurient interest which our former monarch takes in my private affairs. Unfortunately, some current citizens of the Republic joined in the bashing. Thus, our Secretary was quite disturbed lest I read these ancient discussions and become aggrieved.

Rest assured, fellow citizens, it's not going to happen. I understand the emotional pressures to "join in" whenever Ben's going on one of his crusades. It's much easier to be "in" than "out" when the purge trials are going on (as the history of Stalinist Russia, and quite a number of political and religious cults, testifies). You'd have to truly be made of strong stuff to be able to face down the founder of the nation when he's telling you that those people over there are evil and should be shunned.

The important thing is how we relate to one another today, in the Free Republic. I honestly don't care what you might have said about me in order to fit in in the nasty, cultish atmosphere of the Kingdom, as long as you don't still hold such opinions. And I assume those of us who were also on the receiving end of hate campaigns in the Bad Old Days will have a similar attitude.

The past is the past, and we've all done things we regret. Let us not be ashamed of our past mistakes – but, rather, prove that we can learn from them. ■



MIESTRÂ SCHIVĂ
Editor / Redactéir

A recording of part of this editorial (in Talossan) will soon appear on Radio Free Talossa.

Ûn aubümiçaziun d'iens pàrts d'acest edituriál bentôptapiarha siir Raídiu da Talossa Liverescù.

dal redactéir

ACESTILOR QI OBLIENT LA TGISTÔRIĂ...

Ár Regeu vienstîmp, sà noi toct sâpent, tent 'n tendençù bastânt malprûvat pèr surar las vidàs perziunâis da sieu enemici politicâis ainciün zebâts. Chirisch Caveír füt solamînt el dirnalaiset dîn 'n rif da xhînts qi reçaifevent tál tractadâ. Eu steçâ füt dîn acest rif. Cumpâts, va vidâ perziunâl întzereça el fundéir inlustrîeu del Pâts sà mült qè o todavîa staxa qè c'è ûnfaßil sterminar en parlar.

C'è ûnîmpîrtînt. Verberar la Regeu non isch va pûrpös oxhi. Qèt eu intençéveu, c'è qè nouveux citaxhiéns del Regipâts sînt sovînt tál ziverberats par els acavamáintschen încuntraziviciâis da Talossa (els vaintsch-simcâ ârs da tgistôriâ continuînt, el glhetg, é.s.p) qè os sovînt credent sânc fragâ qètevri ziâ el Regeu. Comprís sieu opiniuns, qualsetîmp tréi vârschâs, süper sieu enemici politicâis, del paßat és del presáintsch.

Ár Secretár d'Estat nûtîmp fâts müstâirs da toct las ziscußiuns dal cuncarnaziun modernâ da Wittenberg. Dals zicußiuns pû frûs, âvegñhençâmînt, conçernevent me steçâ, és la întereçù bizarrâmînt libid qè tent ár Regeu vienstîmp süper va afâes privâtsilor. Malfortunadâmînt, dels citaxhiéns nûtîmps dal Repúblicâ partiçipectent în el Miestrâ-verberar. Pèr aceastâ raziun, ár Secretár füt bastânt astûrat da cráintschâ qè eu liradreu acestilor zicußiuns anciînts és zevienarè ciuncadâ.

Estetz tranqîls, citaxhiéns cuncuriâis, acest non paßara. Eu cumprencheu els preßureux emoziunâis à "se aßociatar" quândevri la Regeu comença viens da sieu crutzadâs. C'è mült pû fatgîl estarè "în" qè "út" quând qè paßent las provâs c'hreinsadâs (come testifica la tgistôriâ da Rußîa Stalinistâ, és da bastânt mült dels cûlts politicâis és relixhiösen). Si fost estarè façat da efnâ lâxhir, pèvârè înfuntar el fundéir dal Naziun quând o se ziâ qè acestilor xhînts là hêi sînt máis és fossent estarè escivats.

La cosâ împîrtînt isch come noi interelent oxhi, în la Repúblicâ Liverescù. Eu tgonestamînt non cuntzineu qèt voi pût-estarè zirevetz pèr qè voi dêschevent în el schloc vèstuc'h cûltesc del Regipâts, proviut qè voi non adüc tenetz táis opiniuns. És eu presûmeu qè acestilor da noi qi ocsâ sofrievent campagñhâs da haßa în las Ziuâs Veâs Máis tiscent 'n atitüd similâr.

El paßat isch el paßat, és noi toct façevent cosâs qè noi regretent. Qè noi non séradrent ruschinats da ár focs paßats - más, propi, atestar qè noi povent lernar da lor. ■

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION GOES HELL FOR LEATHER

By our own correspondent

The traditional torpidity of a Talossan summer is well and truly over, with a change of leadership at the top of the Constitutional Convention providing a controversial kickstart to the process of designing our basic law.

Michael Pope, Dean of the Provisional Governing Council, resigned his role as chair of the Committee in early September pleading excess work commitments. Into his place has stepped the frankly hyperactive Miestrâ Schivâ.

"There is no reason at all that, if we get our act together, we can't have a completed constitution and properly elected legislature, government and judiciary by the end of the year," said the new Committee head. "I aim to see that it happens."

Progress has indeed been swift since our last issue - in fact, too quick. The Convention looked to be heading speedily for consensus on the subject of the composition and function of Parlamînt - until Chirisch Cavêir returned from a sabbatical to be aghast at what had been going on in his absence.

As we go to press, the convention is voting on three vital issues. Whether to replace the traditional Talossan system of a "D&D Cosa" - where members of the lower house are awarded multiple seats - with a "One Member One Vote" system. Votes are also being taken on whether

the legislature should be bicameral; and, if so, on whether cross-membership should be allowed between the Houses.

After this comes the discussion on the relative size of Parlamînt to the population. Chairwoman Schivâ is in no doubt as to where her votes lie.

"The old Kingdom used to have a legislature too big for its size, leading to double-ups in its membership and that of the judiciary and leading to too much power in too few hands," explained Schivâ. "I want the legislature to start small - meaning that elections will mean something, and we don't have frankly undemocratic cross-membership, which gives some Members of Parlamînt extra-special powers."

The Convention has voted to retain its standing Committee, although its membership looks set to expand. Before Cavêir pushed his foot on the convention-brake, first drafts of the section on the composition of the Government and of the High Court had also been put in front of the conveyor belt of a frankly startled Convention.

If Schivâ's wishes come true, we could have an entire new Constitution to analyse for you by the time this magazine reaches its third issue. Watch this space. ■



CULTURAL CORNER

● In July next year, free Talossans from around the globe may descend on the ancestral homeland for the biggest social event since the orgies which accompanied the last days of Rome. Provisional Secretary Jeff Ragsdale has tentatively suggested an "Independencefest", celebrating the Republic's first year of existence, on the model of the successful Talossafests which have characterised the Kingdom's history. Ragsdale hopes that Talossans from as far away as Sweden or New Zealand will be invited to participate.

● The Republic's other main media outlet, Radio Free Talossa, now has its own website at <http://rft.talossa.net/>. While no new issues of the current events show Stubborn Things have been produced yet, there are several episodes of Chris Gruber's "retro-sci-fi" radio serial, *Crash Lunar*, for your amusement and enlightenment. ■

THE BIRTH OF A NEW WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

By MARTÌ-PÁIR FURXHÉIR

Traditionally, Talossan publications have mostly been newspapers relating the recent events in the nation, generally with a subjective point of view.

Qator Itrîns tries to break away from these types of reports, since they mostly echo the day to day activities which Wittenberg users know all about anyway. This way, QI is able to present new, fresh content not present elsewhere.

However, because something is published on Wittenberg doesn't mean every citizen got the chance to see it, or even to grasp its importance. This is why *Qator Itrîns* press is proud to announce the foundation of a new weekly Talossan newspaper : *Talossa Seifetziueascâ* (Weekly Talossa)

Unlike its predecessors, *Talossa Seifetziueascâ* will be dynamically generated using a content management system, enabling its writers to submit articles online, reviewer to corrects and approve these, and our publisher to easily send the newspaper to all its subscribers, who can easily manage their subscription online.

Talossa Seifetziueascâ will feature reviews of the most recent events in the Republic in a few short paragraphs to help, in a few minutes, grasp the events of the week. Articles are expected to be shorter than 150 words, unless they cover a major event.

From time to time, longer articles will be published, when they focus on what's happening right now.

A economic section will publish exclusive weekly calculations on the Talossanomy not available elsewhere, since all of our indices are daily calculations.

We expect to publish the newspaper every week, on Thursdays, with a deadline for submission on Tuesday evening, except for reviewers, who will have until Wednesday evening.

Talossa Seifetziueascâ's editor-in-chief is Marti-Páir Furxhéir. ■

Talossa's Newest Political Party –

THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

A Qator Itrins Exclusive

The Republic's political establishment has been rocked to its foundations by the birth of a new political party, jointly headed by two citizens who would have once described themselves as deadly enemies. The new party, the Social Democratic Party of Talossa (PSD), positions itself firmly on the Left of Talossan politics. Chirisch Caveir has been named as Party President, and Miestrà Schivà as Party Secretary.

The new party has raised eyebrows, teaming as it does a revolutionary socialist with a supporter of John Kerry. But the new Party Secretary denies that this is a divergence too great to contain.

"Chirisch and I have had our differences in the past", says Ms Schivà, "and we're hardly politically homogenous in the present. But, given the preponderance of conservative opinion in the Republic, I think that everyone on the Left has to band together for their own safety."

The PSD, while the first party to publish a full platform (printed to the right) is the fifth party to announce itself since the birth of the Republic. It joins the Labour Party (led by Rischà Scovaglh), the Guelph Party (led by Michael Pope), the Religious Right (led by J.P. Griffin) and Ronalt Rosaís' MAWMS2LCNVPR. *(Unfortunately, this column was too small to contain the full name of the last mentioned party. - Ed.)*

Platform of the Talossan Social Democratic Party / Platform del Parti Sociál Democràtic Talossán

The Talossan Social Democratic Party is open to all Talossans who desire a strong, democratic Republic which builds on twenty-five years of Talossan history, where all points of view are welcome, and where all Talossans can participate in continuing to build our noble national culture.

The Talossan Social Democratic Party is open to all Talossans who believe in:

· a strong, democratic Republic, built in the best traditions of twenty-five years of Talossan history and culture;

· a Republic where all points of view are welcome, and where all Talossans can participate in continuing to build our noble national culture;

· a Republic which will be open to the best ideas from all the nations of the world in our nation-building endeavours, both macro- and micro-.

The PSD is founded by Talossans who describe themselves as Socialists and Democrats. However, it believes that Talossan issues, rather than macronational politics, should determine your vote.

PARTI SOCIÁL DEMOCRÀTIC TALOSSÁN
The men, no machines, no power, no money, no money's worth.



...for people and for humanity, and all, of free nations dedicated to Talossan values.
TALOSSAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Party Principles

The five principles on which Talossan Social Democracy is based are *Freedom, Equality, Community, Culture, and Democracy.*

These principles are at the centre of the policies that the Talossan Social Democratic Party has offered to the Talossan people. These are the values which will rule our major campaigns and our political activity whether in opposition or in Government.

The Talossan Social Democratic Party is committed to representing the ideals of our movement in Government and ultimately we aim to be the majority party in la Repùblicà Talossán.

Freedom is a fundamental human right. No society is free unless the men and women who make up that society are free individuals. Apathy, hostility, and ignorance are the enemies of freedom. The PSD extends the same freedom to all members of society and opposes the victimisation of individuals on the basis of class, colour, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, race, or ethnic origin. **We will**

work to nationalise the domain name and web-space of the Talossan Republic, for the security and freedom of the whole community.

Equality implies reorganising society with the specific object of creating a more equal distribution of power, and not just opportunities for individuals to become powerful. The Talossan Social Democratic Party sees equality not only in Talossanomic terms but also in terms of social, political, and Talossanomic rights. It is necessary for the individual to enjoy these rights under the law if there is to be full and true equality.

Social Democracy realises that men and women by necessity and by choice live in co-operation with each other. In the community or the social club there is a common sense of belonging and of purpose, not only in the Republic, but also in the micronational world. The spirit of *Community* places the PSD on the side of the oppressed, not only in the Republic of Talossa but also in all countries of the world. As a result of these beliefs, **we would establish foreign relations with serious, stable micronations, with a view towards establishing the Republic as a superpower in the micronational world, including acting as a mentor to developing micronations.**

Culture in Talossa means our rich history and rich language, *el Glhetg*. The PSD will fight to establish an Academy of Arts and Sciences, to write trustworthy history and promote the Talossan language. **We will also call for an open culture, one in which all Talossans and ex-Talossans of good will, whether Republican, Royalist or non-aligned, will be welcome in the Republic's cultural endeavours.**

Democracy is fundamental to the concept of giving power to people to shape their own lives. This empowering of people should cover all aspects of life, including culture, politics, and justice. **Toward this aim, we will work to push for a Constitution as democratic and just as can possibly be.**

*If you support where we stand, and want to make a difference in the Republic, then **join us!***

IS TALOSSA A STATE, OR A NATION?

Even today, there is much confusion in the world between the words “state” and “nation”.

A state is a sovereign legal geo-political entity with a precise territorial claim, and which is generally recognized as being sovereign. Most states are universally recognized, but several grey areas exist, the most notable being China, more precisely around the issue of Taiwan. Only states have the right to hold a seat in the United Nations, which is in reality a union of states, instead of being a union of nations.

The nation concept, on the other hand, is less clear in English. In the Shakespeare tongue, specially in the USA, nation is also a term used to refer to the people who live in a state. However, in international politics, the definition of nation is “a group of people who share common customs, origins, history, and frequently language”.

Many countries are composed of a single major nation, such as the USA, France, Germany, Australia and Japan. But many countries, such as Great Britain (which has four major nations) and Canada (which has two major nations) are multi-national.

In fact, in Québec (the Canadian province in which most of the French-Canadian nation lives) the term “national” refers to the Québec province. When referring to Canadian institutions, the term “federal” is used instead.

In some cases, especially Africa, a nation is spread across several states, because the colonizing European powers decided to ignore the existing states and to form new artificial ones over the existing colonized states.

But the most interesting nation is the Jews. Nowadays, Jews have a state, Israel, in which they are the sovereign nation. However, the Jewish nation is bigger than the border of Israel, or Palestine for that matter. Many Jews live in North America, Europe or Russia and still have a common custom, origin and history.

Such a nation was able to exist thanks to strong cultural beliefs (in this case, religious) coupled with a strong sense of tradition.

Without these, in a world without instant communications, the Jewish culture would have diversified too much to allow the reunification of Jews living all over the world in a single state.

Québec and France may have been a single nation in the past, but despite strong attachments, a common religion and language, the two nations have definitely split, with



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distinct values, history, culture and even distinct dialects.

But today, in a world of communication, it is possible for nations geographically spread around the globe to stay in touch on a daily basis, and keep common values, goals and even a common history.

It is also possible for non-independent nations, or multi-state nations, to form governing bodies of their own, despite their lack of sovereignty. While these governments do not have absolute authority over their constituents, they often have a “moral” authority respected by the members of the nation despite their lack of legal standing.

In Québec for example, the Catholic church had until recently the authority to dictate a lot of rules affecting the lives of French-Canadians, despite the official separation of the state and the church. Most citizens respected them, and the Government even adjusted it's law to respect some of the rules such as closing stores on Sunday.

It has also occurred in the past, especially during wars, for a nation-state to lose its territorial sovereignty, such as during military occupation. In many of these cases, those states organization a free government in a foreign state, such as when the Dutch government fled to Canada.

The policy of the Kingdom of Talossa has

always been that Talossa was a state aspiring to sovereignty.

However, one must recognize that an aspiring state has no power, no authority, no existence on its own for the simple reason that what defines a state is the recognition by other states that it has sole sovereignty on its territorial claims. Nations on the other hand, whether they are also a state or not, have inherent legitimacy provided by it's member “citizens”.

Furthermore, nations themselves determine which rules are required for a person to belong to them. For the French-Canadian nation, one only need to be Canadian, and consider French to be their mother tongue (thought in the past, one needed to be Roman Catholic). For the Jewish nation, one needs to be of the Jewish religion and culture.

Nations do not need external recognition, since their creation is internal. The members of the nation simply proclaim their common heritage.

I believe that Micro-nations (which should be called Micro-states) fail because they focus primarily on the state part of their movement, completely neglecting the nation part of their association.

The Kingdom of Talossa had developed strong state institutions and has held more general elections than most democracies. But, culturally speaking, it failed to motivate citizens to form national institutions, with Wittenberg being our only really common cultural trait.

I think it is time to change that. I am not saying we should abandon our legislature, or stop aspiring to be a state, but rather that we should try to form a real cultural identity shared amongst us. It should be something we can all identify with, and not something imposed such as a Berber background or a has-been national entertainer.

Radio Free Talossa and *Qator Itrins* are a start. QI already has several regular collaborators, and RFT is trying to enable radio broadcasts with multiple participants.

But we all have to understand that such a common identity is not forced. It will come unexpectedly after participation is shared projects. After collaboration and exchanges, slowly, we will start forging bonds of a cultural nature. We will remember stories obtained through interaction with other Talossans on non-political subjects. We will start having a real cultural history. Not one just listing election results and political fights.

And that is all it takes to become a nation.■

THE BIRTH OF THE GREY CONGRESS PARTY

(Qator Itrins is pleased to begin a series of extracts from the forthcoming *History of the Talossan Revolution*, **Dare Something Worth**y by Christopher Gruber. This extract is from the first chapter, dealing with the events of November 2002/XXIII. - Ed.)

It all started with some Photoshop.

Not Adobe Photoshop proper, really, but the much easier to use software application from the fine folks at Macromedia called Fireworks. Chris Gruber somehow found himself in a retro mood, as he often does during the course of the year, but, this time, it was different somehow. This time, he was perusing the photographs of pompous and bombastic generals and colonels of fascist regimes of the 1930s. A strange place to be, granted, but he was there nonetheless.

The Kingdom of Talossa has a long and grand tradition of flirting with fascist imagery, going back to its roots. Robert Ben Madison, the founder of the nationette, single-handedly brought this fascination to Talossa. The crisp, neat uniforms, the proud, crowing anthems, the taut marching formations... it was all such wonderful stuff to him. And his friends. From the glorification of Enver Hoxha and Kemal Atatürk to the pseudo-fascist parties of his friends, the idea that taking the most fun of the fascist parties and reveling in it for the sake of fun was appealing to Ben. This had such a strong appeal that twenty-two years later, the fascination still softly hung in the Talossan air. And Chris Gruber picked up the scent (so to speak) on 13 November 2002.

Gruber decided to paste his own face on that of the celebrated (in word, song, and province) *il Duce* himself, Benito Mussolini. You know, just to see what it would look like. As it turned out, Gruber, an experienced professional web and graphic designer, managed to make the photo look like Gruber himself was

persuading the Italian crowds with his own vehement style. Gruber could not help but smile at such a preposterous but amusing idea. But it was when he showed it to his good friend Tomás Gariçéir that the fabric of Talossa had begun to unravel, unbeknownst to anyone at the time.

Gariçéir had himself a sense of humour that crossed easily into the dark. So these two photos of Gruber/Mussolini were absolutely hilarious. "Do me next!" he demanded, expecting that Gruber would paste Gariçéir's head onto some random photo of fascists. But the job Gruber did was pretty damn good and thoroughly impressed both of them. The next step was obvious: *Wittenberg*.

Wittenberg had been the Kingdom's public forum online since 1997, and, as such, served as a Talossan show-and-tell from time to time. Gruber showed off his handiwork, which immediately got rave reviews. Much of the praise came from King Robert himself. People who had been incensed with Gruber's angry outburst decrying the death of any sense of fight in the American Democratic Party earlier in the month¹ were now singing his praises. Ián Metáiriâ and Michael Pope, whose own political leanings outside of Talossa tended rightward, were reveling in the spoof.

Gruber and Gariçéir then began tossing wackier ideas around, such as the idea of splitting off from the Progressive Conservative Party to which they both belonged and forming a silly political party full of pomp and bombast, solely for the amusement of themselves and anyone else who cared to watch. So they began brainstorming. The name they settled on was the Grey Congress Party or GCP.

The GCP was not originally intended

to be a serious party. Gariçéir was not one who could easily stomach the harder edges of political life, having ducked away from the Progressive Conservatives (PC) once before in 1998 during a particularly heated campaign in which Gruber himself was running as the PC's candidate for Prime Minister (*Seneschál* in the Talossan language or *ghetg*), which he eventually won. But 1998 was a long ways away in Talossan time (one theory of "Talossan years" holds that each year of regular time in the world is three or four in Talossa), and Gariçéir was unusually easy to forget his hurt, despite being particularly sensitive. Gruber, the harder-edged person, was not only used to fighting verbally, he had earned himself a reputation as someone who would easily slip into vulgar language simply as a matter of course. It also helped that politics was one of his main interests in Talossa. But the Talossan political landscape was growing particularly stagnant. The PC was a monolithic beast, containing the memberships of socialists, former neo-Nazis, conservative Republicans, religious Republicans, and moderately liberal Democrats. The ancient Wes Erni-ism "pot-pie blob," which described this amorphous configuration of dissimilar folks in a single party, was resurrected, most prominently in Jeff Ragsdale's newspaper of record, *L'Oraclâ*.

So, inadvertently, the Grey Congress Party slipped into serious politics when Gruber insisted that they put up a legitimate platform. Gariçéir, eager to go along with his more assertive pal, gave in, and by the end of the month, they had a workable platform and the fifty-word statement required by law in order to register for the upcoming general election. It's odd how a single amusing idea would turn into a legitimate political party platform, replete with all the flowery language and rhetoric associated with

tgistôriâ

most Talossan parties. They were really going to do it; they were going to split from the Progressive Conservative Party and they were going to contest the election.

The GCP platform was pretty straightforward, mostly aimed at what they called “ending the Great Seriousness” (stopping all the talk of ‘real-world’ politics that was causing distress all over Wittenberg) and a strong pro-*glheß* programme. They had some starry-eyed ideas, but they never thought their actions would be the first salvos in a political and social war that would ultimately rend Talossa herself in two.

Now, granted, they were not the only ones plotting and scheming. King Robert and his pal Wes Erni were working for weeks in secret to resurrect Erni’s long-defunct Black Hand Party (*La Mhà Nheagrâ*, or MN in Talossan).² Their agenda, however, was serious and politically motivated from the outset. Their platform was crisper and more forceful, but shared something in common with the GCP: both were happily nationalistic, with a strong pro-culture platform. When the GCP announced itself on 4 December and the MN followed up the next day, Talossa suddenly found herself with not one, but two nationalistic fringe parties!

Ironically enough, Jeff Ragsdale was the nation’s fresh-faced new Prime Minister, ready to make his mark, having just taken over the job from the PC’s long-serving Michael Pope a few months earlier. In fact, Ragsdale had just applied for PC membership about a week before Gruber and Gariçeir made their first moves.³ So, just as Ragsdale was easing into the job (which was not much of a challenge, as evidenced by the complaints he offered in a *L’Oraclâ* commentary⁴), the landscape was changing, without the knowledge of the powerful, much less the majority of Talossans. Misty speculations abounded on *Wittenberg* and in the



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pages of *L’Oraclâ*. What was the next big thing? Would anyone ever be able to stop the monolithic PC? Where is the next fire in Talossan politics going to burn?

The answer came in the form of the two fringe parties, each scrabbling to carve their niche as *the* nationalistic party in Talossa: the MN with its imagery of secretive crime families and the GCP with its own bizarre set of pseudo-fascist imagery, an indirect descendent of Ián Metáiriâ’s Talossan Nationalist Party (TNP). Instantly the GCP platform was challenged, especially their call for a moratorium on discussion of U.S. politics. Although their intention was to “End the Great Seriousness,” they had cries from all over the Talossan political spectrum of “fascism” and “censorship.”⁵ They were clearly amateurs in the land of Talossan politics, it seemed. A quick re-editing of the first plank of the platform could not save them from the effects of Gruber’s temper (who felt legitimately provoked by Ben Madison of the MN and Ken Oplinger of the ZPT). They were off to a rocky start.

It’s not to say that Chris Gruber had such a violent, virulent temper that it could neither be controlled nor contained, nor that it would be the leading factor in the unraveling of the Great Talossan Political Fabric. His

history

temper was a reflection of his clinical depression, to be sure, and was less a cause of the rift and more of a weak spot exploited by those who were looking for weak spots in others. It’s a common tactic to assess the other players in a game, for example, and to make note of their weakness, their security holes, as it were. But Gruber’s temper was a security hole the size of a Land Rover and had big, bright neon signs pointing to it. As Jeff Ragsdale was later to sort of put it, Chris Gruber’s temper was merely part of the powder-keg that set off Talossa.⁶■

FOOTNOTES

1 *L’Oraclâ* #3, 8 November 2002, “Progressive Conservatives in a bit of a turmoil”: “The person who responded to the Benefactor News Service post was letting off steam. That’s all.”

2 *Wittenberg*, 5 December 2002 18:59:31 EST, quoted in *L’Oraclâ* #12: “Wes and I believe that Talossan politics would be a lot more interesting if we had more Talossan issues to discuss, and the formation of the Black Hand, which was in the works for weeks even before the ‘Grey Congress’ was formed, is our way of injecting some good ol’ Talossan excitement into this campaign.”

3 *L’Oraclâ* #3, 8 November 2002, “Prime Minister Ragsdale applies for PC membership!!”

4 *L’Oraclâ* #3, 8 November 2002, “The Prime Minister does not Like Pot Pie”: “This week’s Stoufferian Witt thread makes me wonder if, perhaps, the PC is getting *bored* with itself.”

5 *L’Oraclâ* #12, 6 December 2002, “Political rhetoric heats up and then cools down”

6 *Wittenberg*, “RE: Death threats,” message # 9970, 11 April 2004: “But once you and Amy and Chris met in person, the huge pile of black powder was set, and if the Halloween Crisis had not come about to make the powder [sic] explode, something else at some other time would have. It was only a matter [of] time.”

The State of the Republic So Far

JONATHAN KELLEY is a member of the Committee of the Constitutional Convention of the Republic of Talossa.

What do we leave behind, what do we bring, and what do we create? I see those as the questions that will ultimately define the Republic of Talossa.

We leave behind a shadow government, one person controlling an unbeatable voting bloc beholden only to him, backed by a battery of constitutional weapons and vindictive to the point of pathology. We leave behind the blinders that kept many of us from seeing that reality until we ourselves became the targets. We leave behind a place that once mattered to all of us, though, a part of our heritage and thus our individual life experiences.

We bring with us dynamism: a mandate for change. We bring with us many lessons, not all negative in nature by any means, as to what works and what doesn't. We bring that heritage, the connection to a concept over two decades old. We bring a rich language, a turbulent history, old friendships-and not merely online friendships. The eagerness of Talossans to meet in person whenever opportunity arises - and, for that matter, the fact that it so far predates the Internet- gives Talossa a reality that can never accrue to the Grand Duchy of Scrotopia, or the Principality of Perversia, or whatever other short-lived micronation some bored teen copycat grandly proclaims. So what should we be creating? This is only fun if friendship and politics remain in balance, a fact we must never forget. Take the Constitution. We differ



over how to write one, who should write it, whether it should be simple or exhaustive, nearly every aspect: all healthy differences of opinion. We must see that those differences do not wreck the national unity. Some of us bring heavy baggage from the Kingdom; probably all of us have some. It will not always be that way. One day we of the days of Talossa's "Green and Red October" will be the Old Growth, outnumbered by the modern cybercits with no real experience of the Kingdom. When that day comes, we must not be the crud that clogs the nation's arteries. Only through openness, healthy differences of opinion and zest for growth can the Republic achieve its potential.

What we should be creating, in short, is a micronation with all that was good and admirable about the Kingdom of Talossa, yet free of all its ills. May every

citizen of the Republic exert his or her best effort in that direction. ■

THE REVIEWS ARE IN!

"I just gotta say I read the QI paper and want to say I'm impressed. More than impressed, zealously and emphatically impressed." - **Greg Tisher**

"I must say that I am VERY proud to have published an article in this fine newspaper." - **Marti-Pair Furxheir**

"Holy Shit! Miestrâ, me lass...The Qator is totally bitchin'! Much impressment over here. Nicely, very nicely done, oh M.-one." - **Andy Lowry**

"Well done! Very entertaining, and (need I say) well written. I hope this will inspire some of our members who are looking for the micronational experience to consider joining Talossa."

- **Ián Agüdcestoûr**, former SoS and Deputy PM of Talossa, now leader in the Polyphony community

"This Talossan magazine is excellent guidance for Lavalon, should we ever decide to have a magazine. The article on the constitution and the article about provinces were especially relevant to Lavalon, who has gone through the transition from monarchy to republic as well."

"The Talossan language segments were inspirational to me as they showed that a conlang can be used normally. Kudos to the republican Talossans!"

"The PDF is now required reading for Lavalon's APK Party."

- **"Xon"**, Vice-President of the Republic of Lavalon.

GUIDALIGNHÂS PËR COMTRIBUÇADÉIRS GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Qator Itrîns welcomes your letters, essays, news, articles, interviews and rants for publication, in Talossan or English (or, in exceptional circumstances, some other language which the Editor speaks and can translate). Articles longer than 1,500 words will not usually be printed. Send all contributions to heatherblackrose@paradise.net.nz, preferably in RTF format. Deadline is the 27th of each month.

Sâ vivadra la Repúblicâ Talossán!